

Wrong Gun in Kennedy Slaying?

Three top Los Angeles police officials will meet Tuesday to begin a probe of charges that police ballistics expert Wayne A. Wolfer erred in testimony concerning the weapon used in the assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

The panel, chaired by Asst. Chief Jack Collins and consisting of Dep. Chief John McAllister and Cmdr. George Beck, will meet at Parker Center at 9 a.m., at the direction of Police Chief Edward M. Davis.

Barbara Warner Blehr, Los Angeles civil and criminal attorney, Friday submitted affidavits and a letter challenging testimony given by Wayne A. Wolfer in the Sirhan Bishara Sirhan and Jack Kirsche murder trials.

Mrs. Blehr, admitting her efforts are aimed at blocking the appointment of Wolfer as head of the Police Scientific Investigation Crime Laboratory, filed the documents with the Los Angeles Civil Service Commission.

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They raise the possibility that the weapon in evidence at the Sirhan trial might not have been the one used in Kennedy's slaying.

Pending the outcome of the inquiry by the blue-ribbon panel, Davis said he has instructed Wolfer to make no comment concerning the matter.

Wolfer testified for the prosecution in the trials in which Sirhan was convicted of the 1968 assassination of Kennedy, a presidential candidate, and Kirsche, a former deputy district attorney.

Kirsche was found guilty of killing his wife and her lover, and was given a life sentence. Sirhan is on San Quentin's "Death Row." Both are appealing their cases.

As the cases are awaiting appeal, Davis said he urged the board of inquiry to have attorney general, District Attorney and City Attorney representatives at the hearing.

Mrs. Blehr told The Herald-Examiner she is questioning Wolfer's testimony only because she is interested in seeing that the Police Department has "the best there is" in scientific personnel.

She added she does not believe Wolfer is qualified for the top post, on the basis of declarations made by other criminal investigation authorities.

The documents she submitted were signed by Raymond H. Pinker, retired chief forensic chemist and pioneer of the LAPD Crime Laboratory; Walter Jack Cadman, Orange County Sheriff's chief criminologist, and Dr. LeRoy Snyder, author and authority in legal medicine and homicide investigation.

The experts listed six precepts considered inviolable in firearms identification. Mrs. Blehr, in her letter to the commission, said Wolfer violated those precepts in his expert

testimony, and thereby erred in his identification of murder weapons.

In the Sirhan case—referred to in the letter only by its court number—Mrs. Blehr said Wolfer violated four precepts when he testified the defendant's gun and no other was involved in the shooting of Kennedy and two other victims.

"The physical evidence, however, upon which his testimony was based, established that the three above mentioned evidence bullets removed from victims were fired, not from the defendant's gun but in fact from a second similar gun with a serial number H18602," she wrote.

"The only possible conclusion that must be reached is that two similar guns were being fired at the scene of the crime," she added. "Such a conclusion then leads unavoidably in the question: which of the two guns fired the single fatal bullet?"